Constitution and By-Laws of KELLER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Evangelical and Reformed)

ON OLD SALISBURY ROAD NEAR KANNAPOLIS, NORTH CAROLINA

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PREFATORY NOTE

Keller Reformed Church of the Reformed Church in the United States was organized on August 18, 1904. The Reformed Church in the United States united with the Evangelical Synod of North America on June 26, 1934 to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The Evangelical and Reformed Church united with The General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches on June 25, 1957 to form the United Church of Christ.

The Congregation at its Annual Meeting on January 8, 1961 requested that a Constitution and By-Laws be prepared for adoption. At a duly called Special Meeting on May 14, 1961 the Congregation accepted this Constitution and By-Laws to be declared adopted and in effect at the Annual Meeting in January 1962.

—THE CONSISTORY

CONSTITUTION

PART I

The Congregation

Name

1. The name of this church shall be Keller United Church of Christ (Evangelical and Reformed) of Township 5, Cabarrus County, State of North Carolina.

Purpose

2. The avowed purpose of this organization shall be the worship of the triune God, the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the practice of loving service towards the needy, the building of the kingdom of righteousness, the furtherance of Christian unity and the promotion of Christian fellowship among the membership.

Affiliation

3. This congregation shall be an organic member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and shall be governed by the Constitution and By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of said Church.

Doctrine

4. The articles of faith of the congregation shall be those of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

PART II

Membership

5. Membership in this congregation shall be open to any person who desires to lead a Christian life, who has been baptized and confirmed in the Evangelical and Reformed Church or has already been baptized and a communicant member of another Christian Church, who acknowledges faith in the doctrine of our Church and obligates himself to attend divine worship, to commune regularly and to contribute to the support of the Church.

PART III

Meetings

6. The congregation shall hold an annual meeting and such other meetings as are provided for in the by-laws.

Quorum

7. One-third of the members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

PART IV

Administration

8. **Congregational Meeting.** The supreme legislation and administrative power of the congregation is vested in the congregation itself

assembled in meeting, duly and legally called, as provided in the by-laws.

Congregational Prerogative. It shall be the prerogative of the congregational meeting to decide such questions as the buying and selling of real property, building projects, extensive repairs of church property, the call of a pastor, the direction of the work of the congregation, and such other powers and prerogatives as may be herein set forth. For the transaction of all other business the administration of the church is entrusted to the Consistory chosen and composed as provided for in the by-laws.

PART V

Amendments

9. Amendments to the Constitution shall be presented in writing at any regularly called meeting of the congregation or to the Consistory. By a two-third affirmative vote of the members present at a subsequent regular or special meeting, 10 days' notice thereof having been given by the usual method, such proposed amendments may be changed, adopted or rejected.

BY-LAWS

PART I

Government

20. The governing body (voting members) of this congregation shall consist of all members in good standing.

PART II

Consistory

21. The Consistory shall be the executive body of this organization. It shall be composed of the pastor, and four elders and four deacons. One-half of its members shall constitute a quorum.

22. The Consistory shall organize itself. A president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year.

23. Elders and deacons shall be elected by a majority vote cast at a congregational meeting. They shall be elected for a term of four years but it shall be so arranged that half their number are elected every two years.

24. Nominations shall be made for the offices of elders and deacons by the Consistory. Public notice of such nominations shall be given from the pulpit, by bulletin or letter at least one week before the election. An equal number of nomin-

ations for each office may be made by the congregation at the meeting.

25. When elected for the first time the elders and deacons shall be publicly ordained and installed in their respective offices. Thereafter, simply installed.

26. The Consistory shall transact the business of the church, make provision for the determining and raising of the current expense budget for the congregation as well as for the apportionment of the church and other benevolent projects, the distribution of alms through the deacons, the auditing of financial accounts, and the adequate support of the staff of workers. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all congregational records and report to the congregation at its regular and special meetings. It shall submit any or all records to the Synod as occasion may require or the Synod request.

27. The Consistory may authorize any extraordinary expense, but if that expense exceeds $500 it must receive the approval of the congregation.

28. The Consistory, through its president, and in consultation with the pastor, shall appoint such committees as it may deem necessary for the accomplishment of its work.

29. The Consistory shall meet at least once every quarter for the transaction of such business

as may properly come before it. Special meetings subject to the call of the president or pastor may be held.

Elders

30. An elder is a member of the church chosen by the congregation and ordained to his office. He shall assist and support the pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church. An elder shall take heed to himself that he may be an example unto others, guard faithfully all the spiritual interests of the congregation, maintain order in the house of God, aid in visiting the sick and minister according to his ability to the edification and comfort of all members.

Deacons

31. A deacon is a member of the church chosen by the congregation and ordained to his office. He shall aid in securing the funds necessary for the support of the church in its various activities, foster the principles of stewardship and dispense the charities of the church.

Trustees

32. The trustees shall have the care and control of the property of the congregation as a sacred trust, whether real or personal, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

PART III

Spiritual Council

33. The Spiritual Council shall consist of the pastor and the elders of the congregation. It shall provide the elements for the Lord's Supper and when requested by the pastor shall aid in their distribution. It shall have original jurisdiction in matters of discipline except in the case of the pastor. It shall admit members into full communion and exclude those who may err in the faith or offend in morals. Upon request, it shall issue letters of transfer to members in good and regular standing.

34. Each year the Spiritual Council shall consider the spiritual life of each member. Particularly shall it encourage each member to partake regularly of the Holy Communion, contribute to the support of the Lord's work according to his means, and attend the services of worship with faithfulness. If a member shall fall short of any of these requirements for one year, the Spiritual Council shall make special effort, through brotherly visitation and counsel, to correct the fault.

35. The pastor shall be the president of the Spiritual Council. A majority of the members present shall constitute a quorum.

PART IV

The Pastor

36. The congregation shall elect as a pastor only a minister who has been recommended or approved by the President of the Synod of which the congregation is a part.

37. The Consistory shall nominate one candidate for the pastorate to be voted upon by the congregation. The congregation shall consider only one candidate at a time and shall vote by ballot for or against his election. If he is elected the Consistory shall then tender him a call according to the form prescribed by the General Synod. The call must be confirmed by the Synod or the Synodical Council.

38. The change in pastor shall be in accordance with the By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

39. The pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relation three months notice shall be given.

40. It shall be the duty of the pastor to set a good example to his congregation, to conduct all services on Sundays, holy days and such other days as the congregation may desire, to direct the work of religious education, administer the Holy Sacraments, visit the sick, comfort the distressed, and perform all such duties as belong to the pastor's office in the Evangelical and Re-

formed Church. He shall make an annual report of his work to the congregation.

41. The pastor is ex-officio a member of all organizations within the congregation. As long as he is the pastor no other minister shall perform any religious ceremony in the church without his consent.

PART V

Congregational Meetings

42. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in the month of January of each year. At this meeting the Consistory, the officers of the church, the pastor and all church organizations shall submit their annual reports in writing.

43. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Consistory or by request to the Consistory signed by not less than ten per cent of the communicant members. It shall be incumbent upon the Consistory to call said special meeting within two weeks from receipt of said request, and timely notice of such meeting shall be sent to the membership by the secretary of the church.

PART VI

Members

44. Baptized persons are members of the Church. Baptized persons received into full com-

munion with the Church by confirmation, profession of faith or letter of transfer shall be communicant members. Persons baptized but not communicant members shall be enrolled as unconfirmed members. Baptized members shall be instructed in the Christian way of life and the standards of faith and doctrine of the Church.

45. Members of the Church shall live sober, righteous and godly lives and labor faithfully to bring others to Christ. They shall take an active part in the life and work of the Church. This shall include regular attendance at divine worship, devout use of the Holy Sacraments, diligent observance of private devotions; liberal financial and moral support toward the maintenance of the Church and its benevolent undertakings; regard for its established law and authority, untiring zeal in bringing the unchurched under its influence and sincere endeavor to apply the teachings of Jesus to all human relationships.

46. All communicant members in good and regular standing, are entitled to voice, vote and office, unless otherwise stated in the constitution or by-laws.

47. All members are entitled to a full share in the fellowship and spiritual blessings of the Church, and to the services of its pastor, officials and other workers, as well as to the Christian sympathy and support of all members.

Obligation to the Evangelical and Reformed Church

48. The congregation shall regularly contribute towards the support of all branches of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Synod, according to the rules and actions of the General Synod and the Synod.

49. The congregation shall make such reports to the synodical authorities as may be required of it.

50. A delegate and alternate to the spring meeting of the Synod shall be elected each year, the portion of the traveling expenses prorated by the Synod, and the registration fees of the pastor and delegates paid by the congregation.

51. The official year of the congregation shall be from January 1 to December 31.

Forfeiture of Membership

52. If a member of the congregation shall neglect to partake of the Holy Communion or refuse to contribute to the support of the Church, or continuously absent himself from the public worship for one year, he shall be admonished by a member of the Spiritual Council. If after admonition he continues in such neglect of duty for another year, the Council shall notify him that he is no longer in good and regular standing and his name shall be placed on the list of members

under discipline. If, at the end of the third year, he shall give no evidence of change of heart and conduct, the Council shall erase his name from the church register and notify him of such action.

53. If any member of the church shall unite with another congregation without a letter of transfer, the Spiritual Council shall erase his name from the church register.

PART VII

Incorporation

54. Whenever the congregation desires to become an incorporated body, such Incorporation shall be in conformance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

PART VIII

Property

55. The property of the congregation, whether real or personal, and all monies and legacies, shall be under the care of the Trustees or those designated by them. They shall hold the property as a sacred trust for the congregation and keep the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation in proper repair and adapted for such uses as it approves.

PART IX

Finances of the Church

56. The finances of the congregation shall be administered by the budget system. The budget shall be composed of two parts, current expense and benevolence. It shall be prepared in all details and accepted by the Consistory before being presented to the congregation.

PART X

Societies

57. All societies are subordinate to the Consistory and shall report annually to the congregation.

PART XI

Discipine

58. Discipline in cases of conduct deemed un-Christian, lies in the hands of the Spiritual Council, except in the case of the pastor.

Discipline in the case of a pastor shall be in conformance with the By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

PART XII

Rules of Order

59. Robert's Rules of Order as amended shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specificially covered by these by-laws.

PART XIII

Amendments

60. Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any duly called meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present.